

Mentoring as a Strategy for Faculty Talent Development: Evidence-Based Practices

Dr. Lillian Eby

I/O Psychology Program &
Owens Institute for Behavioral Research

University of Georgia

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Overview

- Understand what mentoring is
- Learn about the current evidence base associated with mentoring
- Identify best practices for formal mentoring programs
- Understand potential roadblocks to success (time permitting)

What is Mentoring?

- Mentoring is a one-on-one developmental relationship
 - Mutually beneficial, but focus on the protégé
 - Naturally developed (informal) or arranged (formal)
- Alternative forms include peer mentoring, team or group mentoring, e-mentoring & hybrid forms
(caveat: very little evidence base)



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Mentor Support Behaviors

Career-related support - aspects of relationship that prepare the protégé for tenure, promotion, &/or university/career success

- *Provide opportunities to challenge existing skill set*
- *Offer coaching and feedback*
- *Protect the protégé from political hot-beds or derailment*
- *Nominate/sponsor protégés for high visibility opportunities*
- *Help the protégé coordinate professional goals*

Kram, 1985



Mentor Support Behaviors

Psychosocial support - aspects of relationship that enhance the protégé's sense of competence, professional identity, and role effectiveness

- *Convey respect for the protégé*
- *Counsel the protégé through difficulties*
- *Serve as a role model in the academy*
- *Provide support and encouragement*

Kram, 1985



Protégé Support Behaviors

- Instrumental support– aspects of the relationship that provide tangible help to or benefits to mentors
 - Technical expertise
 - New perspectives/collaboration
 - Enhanced research or teaching performance
 - Recognition by others



Protégé Support Behaviors

- Relational support – aspects of the relationship that provide intangible support to mentors
 - Rewarding experience
 - Loyal base of support
 - Generativity



The Evidence: Does Mentoring Matter for Protégés?

- Different aspects of **relationship quality**
 - **Amount of** career support received
 - **Amount of** psychosocial support received
 - **Satisfaction** with the mentor/relationship (e.g., meets needs, trust, liking)



The Evidence: Does Mentoring Matter for Protégés?

- Examined different aspects of relationship quality
- Research findings from 173 different studies
 - Meta-analysis of over 3,313 correlations
 - Combined sample size of $N = 43,737$

Protégé Outcomes of High Quality Relationships

**Amount of Career-
related Support**

**Amount of Psychosocial
Support**

**Satisfaction with
Mentor/Relationship**

Protégé Outcomes of High Quality Relationships



**Amount of Career-
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**Amount of Psychosocial
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**Satisfaction with
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Attitudinal Outcomes
*Moderate effect**

Protégé Outcomes of High Quality Relationships

**Amount of Career-
related Support**

**Amount of Psychosocial
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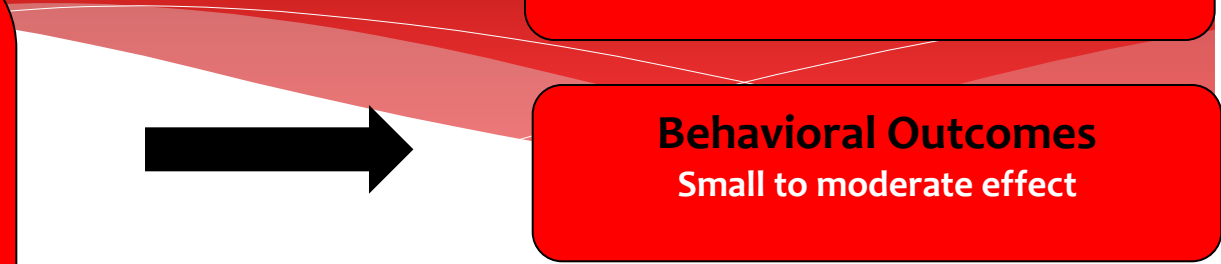
**Satisfaction with
Mentor/Relationship**



Attitudinal Outcomes



Behavioral Outcomes
Small to moderate effect



Protégé Outcomes of High Quality Relationships

Amount of Career-related Support

Amount of Psychosocial Support

Satisfaction with Mentor/Relationship



Attitudinal Outcomes

Behavioral Outcomes

Career-related Outcomes
Near zero to moderate effect*

Protégé Outcomes of High Quality Relationships

Amount of Career-related Support

Amount of Psychosocial Support

Satisfaction with Mentor/Relationship



Attitudinal Outcomes

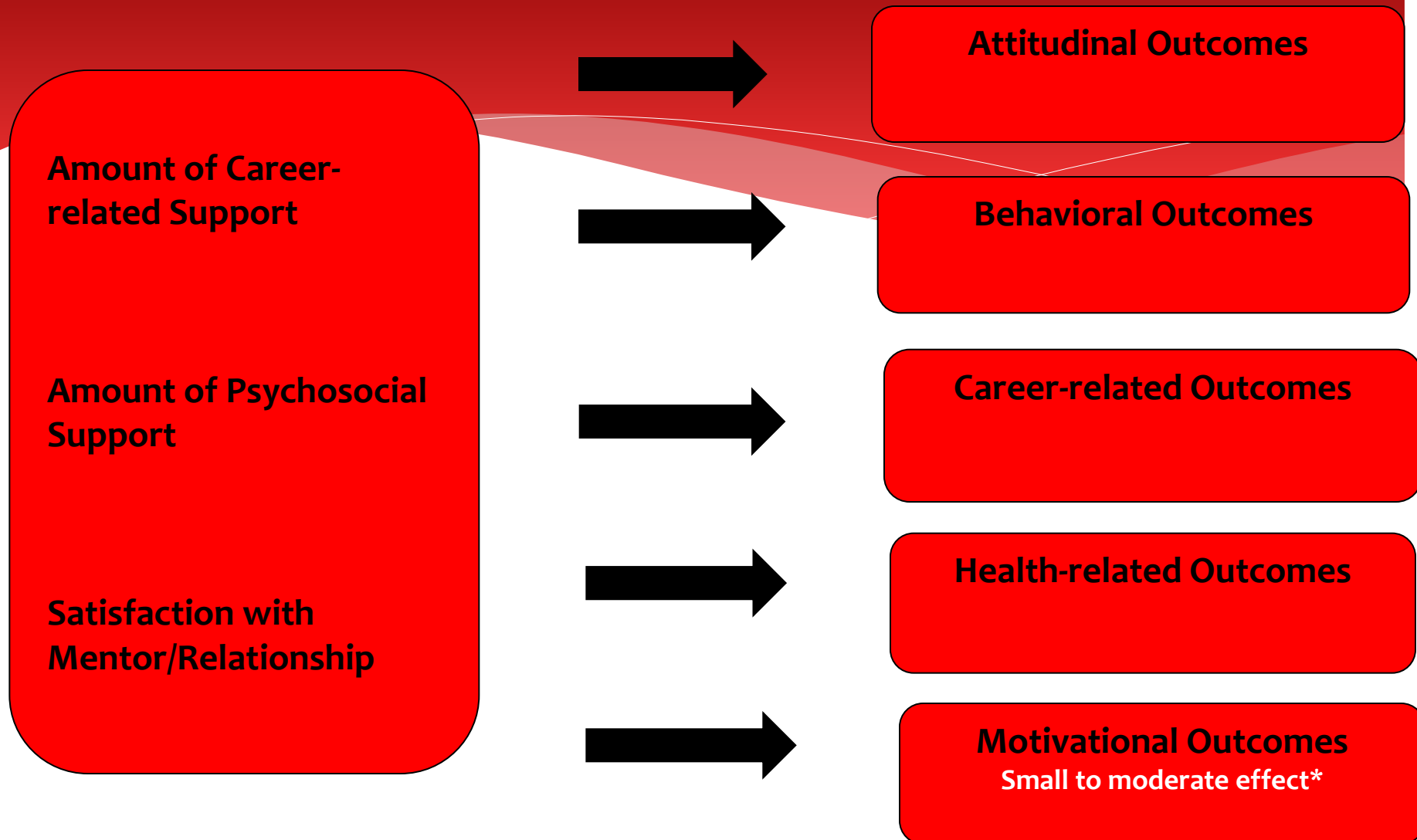
Behavioral Outcomes

Career-related Outcomes

Health-related Outcomes

Near zero to small effect*

Protégé Outcomes of High Quality Relationships



Evidence-Based Take Aways

- Relationship quality matters
 - Generally larger effects than just considering if one has experience as a protégé
 - Considerable variability across outcomes
 - Largest effects for attitudinal outcomes (e.g., satisfaction, commitment)
 - Similar pattern across different aspects of relationship quality



Evidence-Based Take Aways

- Think carefully about the protégé outcomes you want to affect with mentoring
 - Are they realistic?
- Don't put all of your developmental eggs in one basket
 - Link to other faculty development opportunities
 - Encourage protégés to seek support from different sources (e.g., multiple mentors, peers, on-line support & other programs)



Increasing the Chance of a High Quality Relationship

- What predicts high quality mentoring relationships?
 - Deep-level similarity (e.g., attitudes, values, beliefs or personality)
 - Experiential similarity (e.g., rank, geographic location)
 - Interaction frequency
 - Relationship length



Increasing the Chance of a High Quality Relationship

- What doesn't matter so much?
 - Mentor or protégé demographics (e.g., race, gender)
 - Demographic similarity between mentor & protégé
 - Mentor or protégé skill & ability (e.g., experience, training, education)
 - Formal vs. informal (small effects favoring *informal*)

Does the Institutional Context Matter?

- Institutional support for mentoring
 - Role models in the department/college/university
 - Belief that mentoring is valued by university leaders
 - Institutional support has added “bonus” of deterring relationship problems
- Amount of mentoring happening in the unit also independently predicts protégé outcomes



Evidence-Based Take Aways

- Look beyond surface characteristics to make good matches
- Frequent interaction and sustained relationships are important to building high quality relationships
- Don't expect immediate results; relationships take time to develop

Evidence-Based Take Aways

- Capitalize on existing support systems
- Yoke to other initiatives, encourage/reward mentoring among university leaders, & link to strategy
- Piggyback on mentoring already happening in the unit
- Remember that mentors can also benefit



Keys to Formal Mentoring Program Success

- Analogous to building a house
 - Lay the foundation
 - Frame the structure
 - Install the walls
 - Don't forget about maintenance & remodeling



Lay the Foundation

- Identify program objectives and goals
 - Retention (47%)
 - Enhancing performance/specific skills (37%)
 - Diversity development (22%)
 - Socializing newcomers (20%)
- Should be driven by needs assessment
- Link to other initiatives



Without a solid foundation the house will fall apart

Frame the Structure

- Build institutional support
 - Find a high level champion
 - Build shared enthusiasm for a program
 - Make sure there are resources to support the program
 - Identify a group or board to oversee the program



Install the Walls

- Identify protégés and mentors
 - Nomination by others or self
 - Word of mouth
 - Performance review
- Consider commitment and willingness
- Identify people but make no commitments



Install the Walls

- Thoughtful matching
 - Base on program objectives
 - Consider physical proximity
 - Do not pair partners in direct line of authority
 - Take multiple factors into consideration
 - Consider needs-based matching
 - Include some “similarity” even for “dissimilar” pairs
 - Give people input into the match

Install the Walls

- Rolling-out the matching
- Identify & measure match characteristics
- If seeking input, determine how information will be gathered (e.g., written feedback, social functions, interviews)
- Communicate matches to protégés and mentors



Install the Walls

Basic training

Install the Walls



Training tailored to unique
goals of program

Basic training

Install the Walls



Relationship skills training

Training tailored to unique
goals of program

Basic training

Install the Walls

- Develop accountability systems – coordinating body, mentor, protégé
 - Procedure for terminating bad matches
- Systems for on-going support
 - Opportunity to share experiences
 - Periodic check-in on goal progress



Maintenance and Remodeling

- You need to keep mentors motivated
- Mentor of the year award
- Financial incentives for exceptional mentoring (e.g., modest discretionary funds for mentors)
- Praise and public recognition (e.g., plaques, university media, departmental meetings)
- Rotating assignments
 - Don't burn out the good mentors!



Maintenance and Remodeling

- Program evaluation is essential
- Collect data at regular intervals (e.g., 3, 6, 12 month checkpoints)
 - Quantitative and qualitative
 - Must tie back with purpose and goals of the program
 - Document the value of mentoring



Maintenance and Remodeling

Examples of “Soft” Data

- Track benefits
 - More positive work & career attitudes
 - Reactions to the program
- Compare outcomes of mentored group to group not mentored

Examples of “Hard” Data

- Research productivity
- Teaching effectiveness
- Analyze regretted loss (e.g., turnover, failure to receive P&T) among mentored versus non-mentored faculty

Challenges to Mentoring Program Success

- Reliant on short-term funding
- Lack of support from program administration
- Lack of a culture of volunteering or mentoring
- Stand-alone initiative
- Over-ambitious goals
- Poorly planned and/or executed (“dies on the vine”)



Wrap-Up

- Mentoring can be an important developmental experience for protégés and mentors alike
- Not all mentoring relationships are created equally
- Building effective mentoring relationships takes time and effort
- Developing a culture of mentoring requires strong institutional support for mentoring

Thank you!

